Twitter Thread by Yaneer Bar-Yam

Yaneer Bar-Yam
@yaneerbaryam

I have been working on pandemic outbreaks for 15 years.

There is a misunderstanding of the difference between the response in much of the West, versus successful countries (including New Zealand and Australia).

Summarizing:

1.Reactive versus proactive and goal oriented.

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2.Mitigation (slowing transmission) versus elimination (stopping transmission)

3.Gradually responding to increasing levels of infection by imposing greater restrictions which enables the infection rate to grow (red zone strategy), …

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versus starting with high restrictions to arrest transmission and relaxing restrictions only when the number of new cases is so low that contact tracing or localized short term action can stop community transmission (green zone strategy, including localized "fire fighting").

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4.Trying to keep economic activity and travel as open as possible but perpetuating the economic harm and imposing yoyo restrictions, versus making an initial sacrifice of economic activity and travel in order to benefit from the rapid restoration of normal economic activity.

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5.Focusing attention on few individuals resistant to social action because of shortsightedness or selfishness, versus recognizing the vast majority do the right thing if given clear guidance and support, which is what matters for success, as elimination is a robust strategy.

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6.Incorrectly thinking that this is a steady state situation where balance between counter forces must be maintained versus a dynamic situation in which rapid action can shift conditions from a bad losing regime to a good winning one.

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7.Naive economic thinking of a tradeoff between economics and fighting the virus, versus realizing a short time economic hit will enable opening normally and restoring the economy (as recognized by McKinsey, BCG, IMF and other correct economic analyses).

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8.We have to “live with the virus" versus we can eliminate the virus and return to normal social and economic conditions.

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9.Waiting for high-tech vaccination to be a cure all, versus using right-tech classic pandemic isolation/quarantine of individuals and communities to completely stop transmission.

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10.Considering the virus as primarily a medical problem of treating individuals and individual responsibility for prevention of their own infection, versus...

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defeating the virus as a collective effort based in community action, galvanized by leaders providing clear information, a public health system engaging in community-based prevention of transmission, and the treatment of patients is, by design, as limited as possible.

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